

THE ALABAMA FATHERHOOD AND HEALTHY FAMILIES

Quarterly Newsletter - summer 2006

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!



Fathering and Parenting:
Will It Be Pain or Regret?

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We appreciate the fathers, grandfathers and fathers-to-be who read this newsletter and are involved in the lives of your children and families!

John Croyle is founder of the Big Oak Ranch, where he has parented over 1600 neglected, abused or abandoned children in the history of the program. John gave an inspiring keynote speech at the 2006 Alabama Fatherhood and Healthy Families Conference. Here is an excerpt from this important message for parents:

*Fathers and parents that do the hard work of raising children will experience pleasure from their efforts and **pain** from their parenting labors. However, those who choose to be less involved or absent from these responsibilities will miss the pain and hard work and live with life-long **regret**.*

THE 3rd ALABAMA CONFERENCE ON FATHERHOOD AND HEALTHY FAMILIES SO MANY LESSONS LEARNED

The 2006 Conference was held on May 3-5 at the Sheraton Hotel in Birmingham, AL with approximately 400 in attendance!

The speakers and workshop presenters provided very valuable information that can only strengthen the programs in our local communities that work so hard to reverse parenting and family trends that are negatively impacting our children. Below is feedback about the conference from one of our outstanding workshop presenters:

I want to thank you again for inviting me to join you in Birmingham for a great conference. It was well organized, offered wonderful topics and saw great attendance. Keep up the good work.

Neil Tift
Director of Training
National Practitioners Network for Fathers and Families (NPNFF)

Go To www.npnff.org on the Internet to learn more about this prominent fatherhood organization.

Helping Fathers and Mothers Is What The AFI Short Term Skills Training Initiative Is About!

CW was referred to the AFI of Etowah County last year by a city judge. I assisted CW to enroll in the AFI machine tool course. It was clear early on that he had talent! I worked with him to make sure he participated in his other court ordered programs and went to his hearings at city court to let the judge know how well he was doing. The instructor at Gadsden State Community College was so impressed that he helped CW get a job with a local machine shop with the condition that he finish the machine tool course. That was a year ago and he is still with the same company earning very good money with benefits.

Gadsden State Community College gives an "Outstanding Student" award annually to leading students in all program areas on campus. I am happy to report that CW was selected for the 2005 award from over 125 people that were served last year in the Skills Training Division at Gadsden State based on length of employment, employer's comments, instructor comments, attendance, grades and attitude. CW was presented with the award at the Awards Ceremony on 4-12-06 along with 80 or so outstanding students from other educational programs at the college.

*David Collins, Fatherhood Case Manager
AFI of Etowah County and Gadsden State Community College*

HP is a participant in the AFI of Calhoun County and I am most proud to know him! Although HP had a learning disability and lacked self-confidence when he came into the AFI pilot program, he had work skills and needed help with job development. I arranged a meeting for HP at Rehabilitation Services where he qualified for job placement assistance through the Opportunity Center Easter Seal. The agency has a janitorial contract with Anniston Army Depot where HP was hired. He has been working at the Depot for over a year now and is consistent with his child support payments.

*Eric Stringer, Fatherhood Case Manager
AFI of Calhoun County and Gadsden State Community College*

***Reaching Out - A Small Act of Kindness Can Bring Us
Closer To Those from Whom We Have Kept Our Distance***